



## **MINUTES OF THE MILLVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

February 22, 2022 @ 7:00 P.M.

1. **Call to Order:**

Mayor Belinko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the **Pledge of Allegiance**. **Present:** Council Members Sharon Brienza, Barbara Ryer, Robert Wisgirda, Steve Maneri, Town Manager Debbie Botchie (by phone), Town Solicitor Seth Thompson, Town Engineer Andrew Lyons, Code & Building Official Eric Evans, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Ireland, and Town Clerk Wendy Mardini.

2. **Mayor's Message:**

Mayor Belinko stated there was a very productive meeting with our Delaware State Police outreach program on February 22, 2022 for elderly abuse and fraud which was well attended by the Millville residents. Mayor Belinko reminded the public that the Delaware State Police is Millville's Police Department and acknowledged that they do an excellent job protecting our Town.

The Mayor also wanted to update the residents regarding talk of a buffer zone as part of the master plan for the Delaware Inland Bay. The county council is looking at how close the buffer zone should be to protect our wetlands. He stated the county council has been back and forth with developers and residents on how far back they should keep the buffers and he wanted to keep our residents up to date.

3. **Citizens' Privilege:** None.

4. **Appointments:**

Council Member Sharon Brienza introduced the three Board of Election Officers to serve at the election on March 5, 2022 as follows: Pat Guilday, Dave Moeller, and Jim Marshall.

***Council Member Ryer motioned to appoint the Board of Elections for the 2022 Annual Municipal Election, seconded by Council Member Wisgirda. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

At this time Pat Guilday, Dave Moeller and Jim Marshall were sworn in by Town Clerk Wendy Mardini as Board of Election Officers for the 2022 Municipal Election.

5. **New Business:**

A. Public Hearing Notice- Secretary Robert Wisgirda: Notice of the following public hearing was posted in the legal section of the February 4, 2022, issue of the Coastal Point, and on the Town website and bulletin board on February 7, 2022.

B. A final site plan submitted by Ron Sutton of CEA, on behalf of ASF MBTS, LLC, for the extension of Endless Summer Drive from the existing Amenity Center to Roxana Road. The site is in the Millville by the Sea Master (MBTS) Planned Community at Tax Map Parcels #134-12.00-3290.01 and 134-12.00.380.00.

*Synopsis: At its April 15, 2021, meeting the Planning & Zoning Commission voted 3-0-2, with Ms. Scheck and Mr. Roe abstaining, recommending to Town Council to approve the above-mentioned site plan, with the following conditions: trees to be planted behind sidewalks and amend the tree pattern.*

Council Members Sharon Brienza, Steve Maneri and Bob Wisgirda recused themselves from this discussion.

**PUBLIC HEARING commenced at 7:08 p.m.**

Mr. Jeff Clark introduced himself as the Landscape Architect with the firm Land Tech Land Planning in Bethany Beach, DE.

Mr. Clark explained the subject of this public hearing is a short segment of street within the MBTS planned community. Mr. Clark explained the street segment extends from the western edge of the existing amenity center pool and clubhouse area with a connection to Roxanna Road or the former Route 17. He stated the Endless Summer Drive planned construction extends up to the Roxanna Road right of way, which is where the Town of Millville jurisdiction begins and ends. The current Endless Summer Drive roadbed is an emergency entry/exit into the community, and when constructed will serve as a main gateway into Millville by the Sea. This road segment will also serve as the entrance to the proposed village five model court.

Mr. Clark addressed the two issues raised by the Planning and Zoning Commission during their meeting. The first issue was all the proposed street trees should be planted behind the sidewalk. There is a curb and gutter on either side of the pavement then a grass strip and there are sidewalks. These trees are all proposed behind the sidewalk. The second issue was the street trees should be staggered. On the original plan the trees were across the street from each other. The plan is now amended to show the trees in a kind of triangular spacing, or staggered.

Mr. Andrew Lyons of GMB stated he has reviewed the plans and advised all the Planning Commission's requests have been met.

The meeting was opened for any comments by the public. Mr. Bob Wisgirda of Pembroke Lane commented that this short piece of road is essential for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Wally Bartus of 35956 Huntington Street asked what level of speed control is going to be put into this road because people in the summer are looking to cut corners and get to the beach. People coming up Roxanna Road will now see the red light at Roxanna and Burbage will use this as a cut through. His main concern is grandchildren and adults will be crossing and speeding will be a safety issue. He said he is just trying to understand if there is any way we can mitigate this at the outset rather than waiting for something to go wrong first.

Mayor Belinko pointed out later on the agenda there will be an ordinance that will be voted on to reduce the speed limit for Roxanna Road and Burbage Road and trying to get some crosswalks through DelDOT.

Mr. Paul DuCott of 35978 Huntington Street, Millville, DE questioned what trees will be planted by the sidewalks and voiced concerns about irrigation. Mr. Clark responded by saying there are three different varieties planned that are not next to each other, namely Sycamore trees, Red Oak and Red Maple.

Ms. Pat Guilday of Millville by the Sea noted there was a huge issue of over 90 trees dying due to lack of irrigation. Mr. Clark responded by saying he was not sure of that answer as it was the decision of the developers as to whether they were going to install irrigation. He added it is not a requirement of the Town Code, but he will mention that it is a concern to the developer.

Carlos Melendez, 17057 Bellevue Court was curious if the roads will be for public use or residents only. Town Manager Debbie Botchie stated that all roads are public in Millville. He also wanted to confirm if there is a deceleration and acceleration lane from Roxanna. Mr. Clark responded by saying that is correct.

**The PUBLIC HEARING was closed at 7:22 p.m.**

C. Discuss, consider and possible vote on a final site plan for the proposed extension of Endless Summer Drive.

Council Member Ryer and Mayor Belinko commented that they were happy with the proposed final site plan.

Council Member Ryer made a motion to approve the final site plan for the proposed extension of Endless Summer Drive, seconded by Mayor Belinko.

***Mayor Belinko asked for a roll call as follows:***

**Robert Wisgirda     Abstain**  
**Sharon Brienza     Abstain**  
**Ron Belinko         Yes**  
**Barbara Ryer        Yes**  
**Steve Maneri        Abstain**  
***The motion carried unanimously 2-0-3***

D. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Resolution 22-06 regarding stipends for the Millville Election Officers.

Debbie Botchie shared with council that there are two separate groups. There is Board of Elections who were just sworn in. The Council approved approximately one year ago that boards, commissions, and council members will receive \$25 per meeting that they attend. She stated what was being discussed tonight are stipends for the election officers who will have to be here from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. when the polls close. One Board of Election member, Pat Guilday, will be the inspector. She is required to attend the election all day as well. There will have five individuals here 10 hours or more.

Council Member Wisgirda recommended \$12.00 - \$12.50 per hour which is equivalent to what the State pays. Council Member Ryer agreed and suggested \$10.00 - \$12.50 per hour. Council Members Brienza and Maneri stated that they felt the election officers deserved more pay than that since they have a lot of responsibility and wanted it stated for the record.

Town Manager Debbie Botchie made a recommendation for Council that since it is a long day the Town purchase lunch and dinner for the election officers. Mayor Belinko, Council Member Ryer, Council Member Brienza and Council Member Maneri all approved of purchasing lunch and dinner. Council Member Wisgirda had no comment.

***Council Member Ryer made a motion to set the stipend for Board of Elections officers for \$125.00 per day. Council Member Wisgirda seconded the motion. Mayor Belinko asked for a roll call as follows:***

**Robert Wisgirda     Yes**  
**Sharon Brienza     Yes**  
**Ron Belinko         Yes**  
**Barbara Ryer        Yes**  
**Steve Maneri        No**  
***The motion carried unanimously 5-0***

E. Discuss, consider and possible vote on an agreement between the Town of Millville and the State of Delaware Department of Elections.

***Synopsis: The purpose of the agreement is to allow the State of Delaware to lease the Community Center at Evans Park to use as a polling location for the following dates: Primary Election to be held on September 13, 2022 with early voting August 29, 2022 through September 12, 2022; and the General Election to be held on November 8, 2022 with early voting October 24, 2022 through November 7, 2022.***

Council Member Wisgirda stated that he would like to see this go through because it would be quite convenient for our citizens. He noted that the Town has a beautiful facility, and it is a good opportunity to highlight this beautiful park and community center. The stipend that would be paid could go to improving the facility.

Council Member Ryer started her comments by first thanking Council Member Wisgirda for organizing this with the Sussex County Election Commission. She stated she felt very comfortable with the contract since our attorney has reviewed and approved it. Ms. Ryer also commented that the Community Center will be a more convenient location for all Millville residents.

Mr. Wisgirda introduced Mr. Ken McDowell who is the director of the Sussex County Election Commission in case anyone had any questions.

Council Member Brienza also agreed that this was a wonderful thing for the community and is totally in favor of hosting the election at the Community Center.

Mayor Belinko commented that he also thought it was a great idea for the community, making it a more convenient location for voting. He also thanked Council Member Wisgirda for organizing this with the Election Commission.

***Council Member Ryer made a motion to allow the State of Delaware to lease the Community Center at Evans Park to use as a polling location the following dates: Primary Election to be held on September 13, 2022 with early voting August 29, 2022 through September 12, 2022; and the General Election to be held on November 8, 2022 with early voting October 24, 2022 through November 7, 2022. Council Member Maneri seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

- F. Discuss, consider and possible vote on “Mayors’ Monarch Pledge” - Mayor Ron Belinko, Ms. Sally Griffin, and Mr. Paul DuCott.

Mayor Belinko started by saying that the Town has a Comprehensive Plan that is entering into our fifth year. This fifth year is going to be a time where we are going to have to update and make any amendments to it. Part of that current plan includes collaborating with developers, putting in trees, putting in native plants, putting in pollinator plants to protect the monarch butterflies.

Mr. Belinko pointed out locations that would be ideal for this type of program at Evans Park near the stormwater pond. It would be an excellent location for an education center. Another location would be at the corner of Windmill and Atlantic Avenue a/k/a “The Gateway to Millville,” where we are trying to get permission from DelDOT to do something educational with some of these native plants and pollinator plants.

Mayor Belinko introduced Ms. Sally Griffin, 35892 Huntington Street, Millville, DE. Ms. Griffin explained they produced a proposal for the mayor of Millville, to be part of the National Wildlife Federation, Mayor’s for Monarchs program. She explained it is a nationwide program with over 600 people who have already signed up for the pledge. Ms. Griffin along with Mr. Paul DuCott created a proposal. The Town not only would participate in the pledge, but by doing it through creating a pollinator garden focusing on monarch butterflies in the town park, would possibly enhance the Gateway to Millville as well. She explained this is a program throughout the entire country and the National Wildlife Federation allows communities and their elected officials to take a real action to help iconic butterflies grow in numbers. Ms. Griffin advised the Monarch butterflies are in danger, they are improving slightly, but they are nowhere near safe.

Ms. Griffin explained that the initial letter she sent to the Town does implement some items on the comprehensive plan. She stated it is really an opportunity to engage volunteer groups and other residents. It is an opportunity for education. It is something positive the Town can do at a very low cost. To participate in this pledge, there are some commitments that must be completed. Three items on the National Wildlife Federation’s list would fulfill the pledge, there are others, and you certainly you can discuss that later if these do not float your boat, but these are the ones that I thought were appropriate. The first one is the issue of proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of Monarch butterfly and the need for habitat. Plant and maintain a monarch and pollinator friendly Demonstration Garden in a prominent community location and the third item is engage with developers, planners, and landscape architects to identify opportunities to create monarch habitats.

Next to speak was Paul DuCott who works for the Town. He stated that people love the park and a project like this would be a wonderful opportunity. He also mentioned the National Wildlife Federation has butterfly kits at a very reasonable price.

Ms. Botchie expanded on this project and is supportive of it. She mentioned there used to be gardens outside of Town Hall and they were taken away when Atlantic Avenue was widened. Ms. Botchie pointed out that this is a fabulous opportunity, because the Gardeners by the Sea really want to help us make that park shine with plants and pollinators.

Council Members Ryer, Maneri and Brienza also mentioned that this was a wonderful idea, and they are supportive of it.

***Council Member Brienza motioned to approve the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program, seconded by Council Member Ryer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

- G. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Resolution 22-07 requesting Delaware Department of Transportation to reduce speed limits on Substation and Burbage Roads in Millville.

Ms. Brienza said there is a lot of concern raised by Planning and Zoning that 50 mph on Substation Road is not acceptable, with all those homes and people crossing that street just was not safe. Mr. Wisgirda mentioned Beaver Dam Road being a 50-mph zone that needed to be included in this Resolution. Mayor Belinko also commented that Burbage Road is too busy now and it is hard to walk across at any given time.

Ms. Botchie informed Council that if they want a speed reduction on Roxanna Road, DelDOT will need traffic data, crash data, all those things that we do not have the resource to get. She recommended that Council stick to speed reduction on Burbage Road and Substation Road for now. Ms. Botchie informed the Council that there are 3 roundabouts being installed on Rt. 17, so she doubts that DelDOT is not going to initiate any speed reduction on that road for now.

***Council Member Brienza motioned to approve the Resolution 22-07 with amendments for the future communities planned along Substation Road, seconded by Council Member Ryer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

- H. Discuss, consider and possible vote on Resolution 22-08 to hire a part-time Park Maintenance Worker.

Mayor Belinko advised that the person who was hired, declined the job. There will be no vote on Resolution 22-08.

## 6. **Citizens Privilege:**

David Moller, 30431 Blue Heron Drive suggested to help fund the Monarch project, we ask residents donate \$100.00, for example, and get a brick with their name installed at the park or some sort of recognition in return.

Jim Marshall, 14 Juniper Drive suggested we may want to contact the Botanical Gardens in Dagsboro and get some input from them since they do a Monarch Butterfly program also.

## 6. **Announcement of Next Meeting:** Scheduled for March 15, 2022

## 7. **Adjournment**

***Council Member Brienza motioned to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Ryer, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.***

Respectfully submitted,

WENDY MARDINI  
Town Clerk